Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 12, with the following amended paragraph:

As embodied herein, and similarly depicted in Figure 1, the method 10 as discussed may further optionally be practiced by duplicating the transmitted packet 14 as it approaches the node along an incoming transmission pathway 22, and splitting the original packet 14 and ~~the~~ a duplicate packet 24 so they propagate along parallel pathways ~~22~~. As discussed further below, those parallel pathways ~~22~~ will be configured so that the position of the original packet 14 and the duplicate packet 24 may be coordinated based upon the length of the corresponding pathway ~~22~~ and the rate at which the original packet 14 or the duplicate packet 24 traverses through the pathway and any component disposed therealong. For most purposes, the original packet 14 and the duplicate packet ~~24~~ will be virtually indistinguishable from one another unless some modified characteristic is introduced into either the original packet 14 or the duplicate packet 24, and either the original packet 14 or the duplicate packet ~~24~~ may be selected based upon the design of the network 12 for use as the source of the self-synchronization seed pulse 20 or the packet ~~14~~ to be transmitted as data. In that regard, unless otherwise noted, the term packet ~~14~~ may be utilized herein substantially interchangeably to mean either the original packet 14 or the duplicate packet ~~22~~.